

STAFFORD COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
Agenda Consideration

TOPIC: Revised Block Scheduling Evaluation Plan,
Selection of Study Group Participants, and
Options to Select an Outside Consultant

ITEM NO: 9F

MEETING: February 28, 2006

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Executive Director for Instructional Services

ACTION DATE: February 28, 2006

ACTION REQUESTED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT:

That the Stafford County School Board receive information and take action on the plan and methodology that will be used to evaluate the hybrid block scheduling format used in three of the division's high schools, including the option of using an external consultant. The School Board is also asked to take action on the method of selecting at-large members of the evaluation study group.

KEY POINTS:

The School Board is requested to take action on the revised hybrid block evaluation plan that includes changes and additions from the public review meeting and the November School Board Meeting. These revisions include: 1.) measuring the degree of teacher collaboration based on survey data, 2.) adding five at-large participants to the study group process, 3.) analyzing entering and exiting transfer students' schedules according to the number of courses they were able to keep from the previous school or scheduled at the new school. 4.) using percentages instead of a count quantity in some of the comparisons where applicable, 5.) making a specific comparison between SOL test results of hybrid block students who do not have academic courses in sequential semesters with students taking year-long courses in the non-block schools, 6.) evaluating subject-matter retention by analyzing the SOL scores of students with a two-semester lapse between sequential academic courses, and the scores of students who have had less than a two-semester lapse, and 7.) comparing the hybrid block schools to data from the 2004-05 school year, and adding more comparisons between the block and non-block schools during the 2005-08 school years. *(Note: Revisions, changes, and additions to the original proposal presented to the School Board on October 12, 2005 in response to the public review are underlined in the attached document. Also, other additions based on suggestions from the November 15 School Board Meeting are indicated in italics.)*

Also, the School Board is requested to take action on the method for selecting at-large participants of the division-wide study group if the School Board elects to continue with the internal evaluation plan. The following are two options:

(1.) Parents and community members will be asked to submit applications to be selected as participants. Announcements for this application process will be made to the community by postings on the division website, school newsletters, and an advertisement in the local newspaper. The School Board will establish a process to review these applications and to select the at-large participants.

(2.) The school leadership teams or advisory councils in the middle schools and non-block schools will submit applications for those interested in serving as at-large participants. A lottery process will be used to select four participants. The fifth participant, or community representative, will be selected by a lottery process from applications submitted in response to announcements on the website, in school newsletters, and in the local media.

In addition to an internal evaluation, the School Board has the option to contract for an evaluation plan to be developed and implemented under the auspices of an external consultant (see attached examples from Old Dominion University and Virginia

Commonwealth University). The School Board should take action on whether or not to contract with an external agency to conduct the evaluation of the implementation and effectiveness of the hybrid block scheduling format. A number of agencies have been contacted to explore the possibilities and the costs. If the School Board elects to contract with an external agency,

it is recommended that it forms a community committee to not only write a request for proposal but also evaluate the proposals. This community committee should be empowered to make a recommendation to the School Board as to which agency would conduct the evaluation of the hybrid block.

Finally, some notes and handouts from a session on secondary scheduling innovations at the Virginia Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development Annual Conference (November 30 through December 2, 2005) are attached.

SCHOOL BOARD GOAL:

Goal 1: Provide educational excellence through instruction that establishes high expectations for all students yet recognizes the unique needs of each learner.

FUNDING SOURCE:

AUTHORIZATION REFERENCE: